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HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.

I. The Duty of Using One's Life for Others. II. The God of Comfort. III. The Nobility of Confession. IV. Self-Control Possible to All. V. Pilate, and his Modern Imitators. VI. The Strong to Bear with the Weak. VII. Growth in the Knowledge of God. VIII. Contentment in all Things. IX. Abhorrence of Evil. X. Privileges of the Christian. XI. The Love of Money. XII. Divine Influence on the Human Soul. XIII. Moral Affinity, the True Ground of Unity. XIV. The Value of Deep Feelings. XV. Works Meet for Repentance. XVI. Malign Spiritual Influences. XVII. The Old and the New. XVIII. The Hidden Christ. XIX. Well-Wishing not Well-Doing. XX. Sphere of the Christian Minister. XXI. Suffering, the Measure of Worth. XXII. The Victory of Hope in Sorrow. XXIII. The Crime of Degrading Men. XXIV. Self-Conceit in Morals. XXV. Morality, the Basis of Piety. XXVI. The Trinity. XXVII. The Family, as an American Institution.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME II.

I. The Way of Coming to Christ. II. Conduct, the Index of Feeling. III. The Sympathy of Christ. IV. Retribution and Reformation. V. Counting the Cost. VI. Scope and Function of a Christian Life. VII. Human Ideas of God. VIII. The Graciousness of Christ. IX. Evils of Anxious Forethought. X. The Beauty of Moral Qualities. XI. The Problem of Joy and Suffering in Life. XII. The Apostolic Theory of Preaching. XIII. The Right and the Wrong Way of Giving Pleasure. XIV. The Perfect Manhood. XV. Dissimulating Love. XVI. The Door. XVII. Moral Theory of Civil Liberty. XVIII. Peaceableness. XIX. Soul-Drifting. XX. The Hidden Life. XXI. Discouragements and Comforts in Christian Life. XXII. Hindrances to Christian Development. XXIII. Loving and Hating. XXIV. Authority of Right over Wrong. XXV. The Power of Love. XXVI. The Preciousness of Christ.

CONTENTS OF VOL. III.

I. Watchfulness. II. Paul and Demetrius. III. Consolations of the Suffering of Christ. IV. Treasure that Cannot be Stolen. V. Bearing, but not Overborne. VI. The Holy Spirit. VII. Ideal Standard of Duty. VIII. Faults. IX. The Comforting God. X. The Name Above Every Name. XI. National Unity. XII. Social Obstacles to Religion. XIII. Christ, the Deliverer. XIV. The God of Pity. XV. Sin Against the Holy Ghost. XVI. Inheritance of the Meek. XVII. Memorials of Divine Mercy. XVIII. The Victorious Power of Faith. XIX. The Peace of God. XX. Coming to One's Self. XXI. Fragments of Instruction. XXII. The Substance of Christianity. XXIII. Spiritu Blindness. XXIV. Perfect Peace. XXV. Preparation for Death. XXVI. Fidelity to Conviction.

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RELIGIOUS FERVOR.

"Not slothful in business [*i. e.* not slothful in zeal, in earnestness, referring not so much to secular "business"]; fervent in Spirit; serving the Lord."—Rom. XII., 11.

The aim of the New Testament is to inspire and to create a manhood of a nobler sort than that which falls out in the way of nature—nobler than any known before, in this respect: that it embraces the preparation for two worlds; that it develops spiritual elements unknown to the heroism of the past. It is a manhood which, while it transcends all others, is designed to be accessible to all. It is not a manhood which requires genius, but is one to which the poor, the ignorant, all, may alike attain—although in various degrees.

In this manhood, the soul is based upon God. There is to be fullness of parts, there is to be completeness, there is to be the right foundation, the right superstructure, the right materials; and they are to be of the right quality; and they are to be in a condition of the highest activity. To this point flow together all the testimonies of Scripture. Everywhere power, fervency—in other words, fullness or efficiency of life—is to be made a part of the Christian character, an aim for the attainment of which men are to strive.

It is not enough that men should be free from every evil; that they should not sin: they should clothe themselves with positive goodness. It is not enough that men should avoid excess. They must seek to attain high states, and to attain them in blessed equilibrium. Languid goodness is not enough. We must be good; but our goodness must be a goodness that sparkles—that is full of both light and heat.

The term *fervent*, in the original, means *burning*, and has its inner meaning as a derivative from the Latin; but in its Greek original it signifies rather the act of heat in boiling. Substantially it there means the same thing that we mean by it, when we speak of that which has been raised to such a degree of light and heat

Sunday Morning, July 2, 1871. Lesson: Rom. XII. Hymns (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 40, 247.

that it radiates both of them—sends them out from itself. And this idea runs through the Scripture. We are *children of light.* We are *cleansed by light.* When the forerunner of the Saviour came, it was declared, "He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." And the Saviour himself says, "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?" And men, in consequence, are called to be fervent—that is, like fire—that is, really burning, in an active state of combustion. As all fire that is burning sends out light, so they are to let their light shine. They are to be children of light.

Heat and light are not simply physical qualities. They have been so transformed in our imagination that now they belong to moral and intellectual qualities. Therefore, not simply are we to be avoiders of that which is wrong, not simply are we to be practicers of that which is right, but our life is to be so cast, there is to be such an elevation and intensity in our experience, that we shall be *fervid;* that we shall glow with light and glow with heat. That is unquestionably the Scriptural idea of Christian character. Not perfect, not prophetic character; not that of men set apart for special offices and great occasions; but a character which is attainable by all—that is the inherent idea of life. And one of the evidences of the divinity of the sacred writings is, that such conceptions as these, after long experience and observation and insight, have come to be a part of the regimen of Christian life.

Our mental faculties may exist in a state of passivity; or, just a little above that, in a state of receptivity. They may be in a condition of rest, or partial rest. And then they are sheathed, as it were. But they may be aroused by the presentation of objects or motives of various kinds to what is called a condition of *attention*—a condition in which they stand attent, ready to act or to be acted upon. Higher than that, come what may be called the early stages of *excitement*, in which our faculties begin to work, and work outwardly; in which they begin to glow. Then, higher than this, is a condition in which our faculties reach an intense action; and then they begin to be *luminous.* They produce a sensation of light, and certainly a sensation of heat. They are then in their highest condition. Every man knows this who has been accustomed to perform the duties of life in any routine order. When he first addresses himself to his work, how slow, how hard, how heavy it is. As he goes on, he begins to arouse, and things become more easy, more facile, more natural to him. And, as his enthusiasm grows, the clouds seem to clear away from about his head, and his eyes see better, clearer, sharper, more distinctly. His hands are more dex-

terous when he is in a fit of enthusiasm. This is called a state of inspiration. In other words, when a man passes on to the higher forms of excitement to which our faculties are subject, then he is conscious that he is able to do more in an hour than at other times he is able to do in days or in weeks, and to do it better. The lower down excitement is, the more clumsy are the results of mental activity; but the higher up it is, the finer is the quality of the things accomplished, the more complex they are, and they are more certain as well as briefer.

We can see why, in this higher form of mental activity, *light* and *fire* are chosen as symbols. Are there not persons in my presence who have risen to an excitement in which they seemed to see sparks, as it were, emitted from their own eyes? High excitement produces a sense of objective light, though it is subjective. We ourselves say of ourselves that we *kindle*, that we *glow*, that we have a conscience and experience of being warmed. Our hearts burn within us. And this is not simply borrowed language. It is a language which is suggested by our actual sensation of these higher moods of activity. No man really lives except when he is in these higher moods; that is, he does not compass the real manhood that is in him, he is not conscious of that which is his personal identity, until he rises from the lower forms of passivity, or of excited attention, or of working excitement, into the real higher forms of experience—I might almost say inspirational moods.

This state of high excitement or fervor in a faculty is full of strength. We work when we are indolent with the thumb and finger; but when a man is thoroughly aroused it is the whole hand, and all the power of the arm behind it, and all the power of the body behind that, that works. A man's strength is doubled and quadrupled by simply bringing all the energies of the body to bear upon his work. And as it is in the hand, so it is in the mind. There we work slowly and imperfectly when we work with single faculties; but when all the faculties that are neighbors to each other cooperate, we work with more intensity and efficiency. It is only when a man brings directly or indirectly all the forces of his mind to his work that he has great strength and power. The higher, fervent forms of experience tend to wake up all the faculties. One or more of the faculties of the mind cannot become active without rousing up all the others. If some of them work in earnest, all the others have got to get up and work too.

These higher forms, these intensities of mental life, are favorable to the forming of right conclusions. Men's judgments are

quicker and more accurate when their mind is active in its upper faculties. Many a man finds that the first judgments that he forms after waking in the morning, are his best judgments. The first judgment is not always the best one if it be inspired by the basilar faculties; but if our moral sentiments are awake and active, our first judgments are the best. It is not always so when you go lower down. If a man's pride, or selfishness, or temper, or lust inspire him, his first judgments may be the best for the purposes of these lower passions, but not for any larger scope of reason or right. Then what are called *sober second thoughts* may be better. But when the higher moral faculties are aroused and active, a man's first judgments are surely the best. They are the most generous, the most pure, the most magnanimous; and the effect on them of sober second thoughts is to whittle them down, and fit them to our sordid circumstances in life, because they are too kind and too benevolent for such circumstances. Therefore, where the moral elements are engaged, take the first judgments; but where it is the passional elements, take the second ones. In the latter case they always need to be corrected.

There are various kinds of experiences of truth—physical, intellectual, emotional, sentimental, æsthetic, and moral, and there are experiences of truth which are impossible to any lower stage of excitement. They are never known, and never can be known, except by a mind that is aroused to its intensest action. When a man's mind is so aroused, it touches them. Then they are disclosed to it. There are experiences in a fine nature which occupy but a few moments, but which stand out in the memory as if they had extended through the best part of a whole life. As there are some plants that require the whole summer to blossom in, and some that blossom in one or two weeks' time; so there are some experiences that require a great while in which to blossom, and there are single hours and single moments that are worth more to us than all the rest of our life put together.

Besides, it is only in these high conditions of the mind that the noblest flowers break forth into bloom, and that the richest fruits grow. This is peculiarly characteristic of the higher forms of spiritual truth. What are called *moral intuitions* cannot come except in these most rapturous moods.

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."

This is true in two ways. It is true that we cannot see any more of God than we carry a specimen of, or have experienced, in ourselves. It is also true that the *purity of heart* spoken of here is that which results from the most exalted condition of mind under

excitement, and that when we are in that condition we do see what we could not see at other times. Then we have an intuition of the divine presence and of the royalty of the nature of God.

By this enthusiasm, in an eminent degree, men propagate themselves upon others in matters of taste, of affection, of religion, and of things in general.

Iron cannot be welded at a low temperature. There must be heat, and then you can weld iron to iron. And so you cannot weld natures to each other when they are at a low temperature. Mind cannot take hold of mind, nor faculty hold of faculty, when they are not in a glow; but when they are, they can. When your mind is aroused with enthusiasm, then it is influential upon my mind. And it is scarcely any more a matter of my will whether I shall feel or not. I may not follow your purposes; but I cannot but sympathize. If your feelings are strong, I cannot help sympathizing with you, though I cannot go to the ends that you do. There is no other time when men have such power over their fellowmen as when they are in these higher moods. They are the moods in which one mind dominates another. Love and faith at white heat are irresistible. One reason why the apostles had such power wherever they went was, that, having no fastidious taste or thought about the form or proportion of anything, they had this lunging power, and they were hot all over, all the time; and everywhere men caught fire at their sacred touch.

We see this exemplified in society. Hundreds and hundreds of men, who are rich in learning, ponderous in mental equipment, ample in philosophical power, admirable in proportion, who are at a low degree of temperature, and who labor all their life, achieve but little. And you shall see right by the side of them men who have no comparison with them in native power—certainly not in culture—but who have simplicity, straightforwardness, and above all *intensity*, and who are eminent for their success in accomplishing results. It comes from the fervidness of their spirit. They know in whom they have believed, and in what they have believed; and with one or two simple truths, and with light and fire in the soul, they have gone forward and achieved more, a hundred times, than men who were better equipped.

Out of this fact, which is patent to any one who is observant, much false reasoning has grown. Men say, "What is the use of learning? There is a man who is as learned as an encyclopedia, but who has spent all his life for nothing." It was not his learning that prevented his doing anything, but the fact that his learning was not hot. Again they say, "What is the use of learning? Here

is a poor, ignorant person—so ignorant that he cannot speak his mother-tongue correctly; and he has made his life count at every turn." It was not his ignorance that led to his success. He took his nature, and put it in God's furnace, and raised it to a white heat; and it was the heat that did the work, not his ignorance.

Another man has both amplitude of learning and refinement or culture, and his whole mind is intensely active, and with this equipment he goes forward, and is mighty for achievement. He is a Luther. He is peculiarly and eminently a man. He stands, as Paul stood and stands, powerful in his influence over men. White heat in the brain gives power. And if a man wants to make truth efficacious, let him be fervid. Enthusiasts always get disciples. Even if they be scatter-brained, they win their way. So great is the infectious power of feeling that if it is earnest and continuous, it glows and shines until all about it are permeated by it.

Moreover, these high states of mind throw off a great deal which otherwise oppresses men. Most of us work with what millers call "back-water on the wheel"; as when the wheel is so submerged that the motive power has to overcome the resistance of that which hinders its movement. We do not use half of ourselves, because we are so sodden with care all the time. A great deal of our electricity is used in combating fear. We are full of morbid or malign passions which interrupt our progress. There is that which is worse than back-water on the wheel. It is turbid water, it is mud, often, on the wheel. And we have to use half the force of our life in combating hindrances, so that only half of it remains with which to do the active work.

Now, these higher moods paralyze the basilar faculties, or rather make them auxiliary to the higher faculties. And when men are in these exalted states, it is impossible for them to have care, for the same reason that it is impossible for an eagle to have dust on his wings when he is half way up to the sun. Dust does not go so high. If you be low, if you move along on a level, you become spattered with mud; but if you rise high in the air, the mud cannot touch you. Men that live in higher moods have no such besetments as men who live in their lower moods. If men are only fervent, their very fervency carries them into an atmosphere where there are few hindrances to an ordinary Christian life. Temptation shoots with a strong bow, but with a short arrow; and if you fly on a level the archer will hit you every time, while if you fly high he cannot hit you. Fervency has this to commend it: that while it gives to a man his whole self and power, it also carries him where hindrances and backsets are fewer, if they are not altogether left

behind. A state of exaltation, therefore is a state of grace. I tell you that those denominations and churches and ministers who believe in revivals, in intensity in religion, go to the root of the matter. There are some objectionable things in religious excitement; but there is also much that is good. And if men say that passion is not religion, my reply is that there is no religion without passion. For, though passion is not religion, religion in its nature is intensive. But the higher feelings are not necessarily boisterous. The most intense feelings are often the stillest. It is when the fire is first kindled that there is the most smoke and crackling, while the bark and softer external parts are being consumed. As the fire comes nearer and nearer to flame, the less there is of smoke. And by and by the coal surpasses the flame. And the heat is greatest when there is the least sparkling and snapping and roaring.

If you must vocalize, vocalize; but there is not a man that shouts "Hallelujah" who feels more than the man that cannot shout because he feels so much. Some manifest what they feel, and some hide what they feel. I do not say which way it should go. It may be that a double action is the right thing. It may be that some feelings should be exhibited, and that some should be concealed. But this I say: that though intense feeling is not religion, yet true religion tends to excite feeling. It does not exhibit itself in a boisterous way, always. It does not necessarily throw out the limbs and give itself bodily expression—though I cannot deny that I have much sympathy for that, in the strong and impulsive natures. And if you are to choose between the propriety of a dull, smoldering, unburning experience and the sparkle, the flame, and the smoke, even, of a glowing one, give me the one that has life in it. Give me the snapping and the sparks, rather than the ashes that never set anything on fire, nor do anything else. Why, if not doing any harm is the only thing to be thought of, as many persons seem to think, if being safe and having no reactions is the chief idea of religion, then the safest thing in the world is a horse that is spavined, and knock-kneed, and broken down, and spare-ribbed, and so feeble that he cannot think of running away, and could not run away if he did think of it. Why, such a horse is just as safe as a post, and no better. Many men are determined to be so safe! Ah, conservatism is such an important thing! Prudence, moderation—these are all-important in their estimation. "Let your moderation be known," say they. Moderation? Why there is no such moderation anywhere on earth as in an ice-house. Things are never disturbed there. All is proper there. There are many persons who

would conserve by congelation. But not so is it in the tropics, where fruits abound, and grow luscious from every bough. Not so does experience dictate. Men who have made their mark in this world have been men that had fire in their souls.

But it is said that the dignity and the sacredness of religion require sobriety and moderation and propriety. Yes, I think that, too. The dignity and sacredness of religion are real. But there is a dignity of Summer as well as a dignity of Winter. There is a dignity of bounty as well as of frugality. There is a dignity of heat as well as of low temperature. Intensity knows how to be dignified while there is fire kindled in every faculty. It is itself sublimely glorious. There is no other dignity like that of life. For dignity does not mean simply something put up in a state of exhibition. It is not an exhibitory quality. Dignity inheres in the thing itself.

Men in worldly matters show what their opinion is in regard to the fervency. If a man is engaged in his own affairs, he calls himself a gentleman, and a man of propriety, although he enters into his work with an intense enthusiasm. He does in secular concerns, without dreaming that there is any harm in it, the same things which he censures in religion. So you shall see men who through the day walk with their face radiant, their eye full of life, their gestures quick; who address themselves in a versatile way to their business, who are successful in their affairs; who are lively and genial in their social intercourse, so that everybody likes them; and who, when they go to their religious meetings in the evenings, are dull of eye, stupid of tongue, and proper of body, everything having gone to sleep in them, because religion is such an *awful* thing. And that is what they call *an offering to God.* Their secular life is earnest and real, and in that they glow, and are on fire, and they take the fruit of it; but when it comes to their religious life, they talk about *dignity*, and *moderation*, and *propriety.* It is a sham! It is false in philosophy, false in grace, and false in experience.

Irregular, imperfect, one-sided excitement is to be criticised in religion; but it is no argument against religion to say that there is excitement in it.

But it is said, "Is it not bad taste? Does it not lead to a thousand grotesque experiences?"

If one will only walk once or twice through the geometric gardens of Europe, he will see what men understood by fine taste. There he will see one tree shaped like a dove, another like a pyramid, and others like gate-posts. He will see long rows of trees shaped just alike, and forming arches as far as the eye can reach. And he

will see canals, with appropriate water-falls, where every drop goes over marble just so, and every stone is polished and decorous. Gentlemanly waterfalls they are. Everything is very fine; everything is after a given pattern; and the pattern is for the most part geometric. And that is what is called *taste* and *dignity*. And a person who has been trained in that idea of taste, on going into our native forests, would be shocked to see those brown leaves in yonder heap that my feet delight to tread upon, and that are full of suggestions and music. There are bugs on the trees, as sure as I live! And there are birds singing in the branches. In Paris, birds are kept in aviaries, and in wire cages, and are taught to sing properly. But these birds of the forest are uncultured, and fly hither and thither at will. And here is a tree that lops over a brook, and looks as though it were going to fall. And this foreign-bred gentleman, seeing it, would say, "If I had that tree I would make it stand up. Trees were never made to be crooked." Here is a stream that runs and winds as it pleases, observing no rules of exactitude or regularity, and his sense of propriety is offended. Here are all these objects of interest, following the directions which are natural to them, full of instruction and inspiration, and this man despises them, and says, "They are not in good taste."

There are many who do not like that great Park in New York, because it is attempted to reproduce nature. They want those long French lines of level walks, and those glittering tinsel arrangements which are for show, for show, for show. It is the glory of our grounds, that we have introduced into them what is called "natural landscape gardening;" that we are attempting to follow nature, and not to conform to the absurdities of an artificial and corrupted taste.

Now, there is nothing in this world that is so truly the magister or legislator of taste, nothing that is in a position to give canons of criticism and to receive none, in matters of taste, as the noblest feelings in the highest form of their excitement.

When a mother has been long separated from her child, and given it up for dead, and it is brought back in an unexpected hour, and with wild outcry she throws out her arms, and rushes to the child, as the wind rushes, is her attitude, and are her tones and gestures, to be subjected to the rules of a French dancing-master? Is he to stand and say, "You must think of your posture, madam"? I tell you, a mother in the paroxysm of love looks splendidly, I do not care how she looks. The grandeur of feeling overrules all criticism; and critics are to take their lessons and their measures from feeling, and not attempt to criticise according to their own laws.

Let a man's soul be weighed down by a sense of his infirmity and sinfulness, and he cannot express himself in bad taste, however he expresses himself. It is not the expression that I am thinking of; it is the feeling that I see; and that is always grand. Let a man, like the martyr of old, be pelted with stones, and let his speech be interrupted and rendered grotesque by the blows which he receives; let his soul have a vision of God, and let him say, "I see Jesus at the right hand of the Father," and there is no longer any grotesqueness about his speech. You cannot have grotesqueness in a thing that is itself superior to any possible law of criticism. And so, although the lower forms of emotion may be criticised; yet, there is nothing so far above cavil as the expression of genuine moral emotion in its highest form of excitement. Excitement is indispensable to the highest Christian experiences; and the expression of these is perfectly reconcilable to the utmost refinement.

There has been much criticism of the forms of words employed for the expression of religious thought. Look at the objections which are made to our hymn-writers. Nearly half of our best hymns were thrown out because they were so amorous. The hymns of Wesley and Watts, in which they speak of clasping God, or of being clasped in his bosom, were condemned as too full of love emotion. And they were set aside for a long time. But we are now getting back to them. And it is coming to be understood that the full and glorious expression of real feeling in its highest state is the best expression, and that those are the best hymns which follow such expression. And a noble and generous nature cannot but despise such criticism as would lead us to reject such hymns.

We ought not to despise taste and order and regularity; but you cannot have the free expression of high feeling within the bounds of order and regularity. If you must give up either order and regularity or high feeling, I say, Give up the order and regularity.

Go to the plantation, and see those poor children of darkness (dark both ways, outside and in) gathered together, and singing hymns which are a mixture of heathen mythology and Scripture; see them spring into the air with wild outcry and fantastic gestures. There are a thousand things to be pruned and corrected in their mode of worshiping; but I think there is something worse than their rude manifestations.

Go, now, with me into that stately room where there are thirty or forty or fifty people. Each one picks out a whole seat, and sits down on it. And each one is perfectly proper. Nobody speaks to anybody. And when the choir sing, three or four of the congrega

tion manage to get up and join in the singing. And one gets up to speak, and says just what he said thirty or forty years ago, and what he has repeated about once a week ever since. And when he takes his seat another gets up and goes through a stereotyped speech. And when he is done another gets up, and perhaps reproves them both. And when he sits down one or two prayers are uttered —prayers that have been committed to memory, and that are repeated for the five hundred thousandth time! And that is called *a meeting*. There has been no indecorum, no impropriety, not a single exceptional thing, except this, that they were a set of corpses making believe that they were alive. They were dead, every one of them. Every one was really insincere and hypocritical. It was a fantastic and grotesque scene. And I say that the wildest dance of ex-slaves in the woods is better than such a meeting conducted by beings that call themselves men, but that in reality are a set of galvanized corpses. Life is the first element of everything that is proper or in good taste.

But it is said, "Does it not lead to fanaticism and rashness?" Yes, but I do not think that these are so bad as some other things. Fanaticism is not the vice of all temperaments. It is peculiar to those who are over-cerebrated—who have too much brain. Some of you may have to watch against the evils arising from too much brain, but not all! It is true that feeling may be carried to excess, and that it may lead men wrong; but the want of feeling is carried to excess a thousand times where too much feeling is once.

As all good soils naturally run to weeds, so all rich natures naturally run to faults. It has sometimes been said that we cannot help loving men because they are full of faults; and there is more in that than we may at first suppose. Activity with mistakes is better than inactivity without mistakes. Life with the steam hissing all the time is better than death under any circumstances. Life carries with it the liability to error; and so men that are alive are continually at fault. If the water in a bucket is shallow enough, it will never spill over, but if it is full to the brim it will spill over many times—for an even bucket of water never spilled over one side that it did not spill over the other side also.

It is true that intense excitement in religion sometimes leads to rashness and fanaticism, as very rich soil, besides producing the crop, tends to produce an immense harvest of weeds; but would you say to the farmer, "Barrenness is the best cure for weeds; do not raise anything, and then you will never have any weeds?" I would say, "Run your cultivator between the rows, and cut down the weeds and let your crops grow. The fact that the weeds want to

grow is a hint of what a soil there is. And the farmer rejoices in it.

And so, faults of over-expression and intensity are more frequently the results of mis-direction and adverse influences, than of too much feeling. There are a thousand things in life that are mischievous which would not be if they had room to expand. There are men who make trouble in churches because they are not allowed to express themselves freely. Let a man spread himself, and relieve his mind, and he will settle down and become a manageable and efficient worker; whereas, if you hedge him up, and attempt to repress the manifestation of his feeling, by and by, in spite of the deacon on this side, and the deacon on that side, and the minister in front, he will gather force, and burst out somewhere. Let a man give loose to his expression. You can bear it, and he will be relieved.

It is said that in the politics of our country, the everlasting speech-making and writing with which we are afflicted, are a vice. They may be a vice; but they are a protection against revolution. They are our safety-valves. We let off our steam in regard to the constitution and the laws, and then there is no danger. When a man has said and written all he wants to, he feels better. He is more comfortable when he finds that his liberty is not restrained.

And so, in the conduct of churches and social gatherings, the liberty of speaking where there is deep and strong feeling, is indispensable to the health of feeling.

But it is said, "Will it not exhaust men to be in such an exalted state all the time. Do you pretend to say that it is possible for us to live in these conditions of intense excitement at all times? No. I do intend to say, however, that nerve-force is medicinal and nourishing. I think that *nerve* means *doctor*, in the best and highest sense of the term; and that what doctors have the credit of doing is generally done by nerve-force. Nerve-force is, as far as we can see it, life-force, among men. There is nothing safer than for men to have an abundance of sweet nerve-force acting in them and through them. And it is not dangerous even when it is in continuous activity. Excitement, if it spring from our higher nature, is joy-inspiring and health-giving. Excitement that springs from the malign passions is corrosive, and cannot be long endured; but that which comes from joy in the Holy Ghost, from faith, from hope, and from love, not only is not exhausting, but is the only thing that can be endured for any considerable length of time. Men can go on that forty days, whether in the wilderness or in the city. A man can live longer on that than on anything else.

Indolence rusts; but high excitement keeps health and strength, and renews them when they are diminished. A man rusts out more by inactivity in a year than he wears out by wholesome excitement in a whole life-time. There are far more chances that a truly active man will live a large number of years, than that a laggard, dull man will. Excitement, where it is on the right side of the mind—where it is toward God—is to be encouraged and sought for.

These things being so, there are special reasons why we should live in these higher conditions of emotion. The importance of the things which we are seeking as Christians—the importance of our characters, of our manhood, and of our destiny—impresses itself in such a way upon one, that he cannot but magnify that which will the most certainly lead to these results. And intensity of feeling is one of the most efficacious means to these ends.

I do not blame men who seek money, knowing how powerful it is as a means for the accomplishment of a multitude of worthy objects. I do not blame a man for seeking money when he thinks how many ways there are in which, by its use, he can minister to the comfort and happiness of his wife and children. I do not blame a man for seeking money when he sees how many interests it may be made to control, and how it may be made an instrument for gratifying taste and promoting culture. I do not blame men who by industry and enterprise seek influence and power. These have their relative importance. I do not blame men who go to the North Pole seeking their fortune, or who go to the tropics for the sake of laying a foundation for their old age. But oh! if a man is justified in seeking these lower things with such intensity, with an industry and zeal almost supreme, how much more should a man seek with burning enthusiasm and indomitable earnestness that which, after all, is more important to him than silver, or gold, or reputation, or place, or anything else! A man's sum of enjoyment depends upon what he has in himself.

"A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

If a man's heart is not right, he may be as rich as Crœsus and not be happy. It requires something besides money, desirable as it is, valuable as it is, and profitable as is the honorable pursuit of it, to make a man happy. And if we justify a man's zeal and enterprise and industry, and do not blame him for compassing sea and land, netting the one and harrying the other, for the sake of gaining earthly treasures, ought we not at least to manifest as much industry and enterprise and zeal in seeking after the imperishable treasures of God's kingdom—a higher honor, a purer conscience, a serener

faith, and a hope that penetrates into the invisible world? Ought we not to feel as much enthusiastic emotion about these as about the baser things which nourish the body?

Consider, too, the sense which they who earnestly seek these better riches have of the providence of God, and of the all-surrounding love of God, and of the ministration of God's angels around about us. We do not wonder when we see happy families bound together. There are households which seem like an organ, every member of which seems like a separate stop, and all the members of which, together, are choral, playing to each other, and with each other, and into each other; and if we look with approval upon the nameless intimacies, the thousand attachments, the many happy unions which we see formed in life; if we are not shocked at the connections and inter-connections of hearts that are on fire with affection toward each other—those of husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters, or friends; if when these things come to our notice our souls are filled with joy, shall we not rejoice when we behold higher fruits of manhood than these? Shall a man love his imperfect fellow-man, his equal, or one that is less than his equal; and shall we not experience a fervor of love when surrounded with the affluence and exceeding riches of the divine love, that fills the heaven, and overpours and fills the earth—a love that with its sacred touch inflames the heart, and fills the household, and spreads itself in many glinting forms through life? When we have bestowed upon us the fountain and glory of the divine love, shall we be content with torpid feeling? Shall we not glow? Shall our emotions not be permitted to mount up into serene heights—into that love of God in Christ Jesus which passes knowledge? Shall we delight to see men rejoice in each other's love, and say, "I do not blame them for the wildest exhibitions of joy;" and shall we not rejoice in the love of God with a joy that knows no bounds?

A distant relative of a man who has been poor all his life has died and left him all his property, so that he now has an income of fifty thousand dollars. And all men congratulate him on his good fortune. And when he says, in an ecstasy of gladness, "I will send for my old father and mother, and make them comfortable, and my sisters shall have the education which they have so long coveted, and I will help my brother who is struggling for a livelihood," we do not blame him for expressing the happiness which he feels.

But we have an eternal inheritance that is untaxed; we have a wealth that never can be diminished; and shall we not mount up in ecstasy, in contemplation of it? Is a man at liberty to be enthusiastic when he greets his friends with manifestations of love, and to

rejoice when he sees the demonstrations of love in the household, and between man and man; and shall he be conscious that there is a brooding divine love, and be criticised because he has enthusiastic and upmounting feelings? No. If any persons in this world have a right to enthusiasm and intensity of emotion, it is Christians. If any persons are to serve with unexampled zeal and overflowing joy, it is those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, and who by the love of God have been made heirs of salvation.

Bring your best faculties, in their best state, in their highest condition, in their fullest equipment; for God is worthy of them all, and heaven and immortality are worthy of them all.

Christian brethren, do not be afraid of feeling. Be afraid of bad feelings; but let right feelings flame and spread. Let your light so shine, and your warmth so radiate, that men seeing and feeling them may glorify your Father which is in heaven.

And now, my brethren, we will for the last time this Summer stop together and give expression to our feelings, and rejoice in the fellowship and sympathy which we have with our blessed Saviour, as we partake of the symbols of his body which was broken for us, and of his blood which was shed for us. All you who belong to this church are, of course, without invitation, at liberty to remain. All who belong to any Christian church on God's earth are affectionately invited to stay. All those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth, whether they belong to any church or not, are invited to tarry. Everybody who has that in his heart which calls out for Jesus; everybody who in his own judgment says, "I need help, and I accept Christ, and I desire to make an offering of love to him,—" I invite to partake with us of the Lord's Supper. If there is a struggling soul here who thinks it will help him in the way of duty, and make his burden lighter, to take these emblems, let him take them; and if he has not joined the church, and he thinks he ought to join it, let him join it afterwards. Christ first, and then the church. If you are a child of Christ, and if you lift the feeblest hands toward him, or have the least aspiration in that direction, for his sake sit down, dear brother, dear sister, and strengthen yourselves by these memorials, which were meant to be food for your body and life for your soul.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

Accept our thanks, O heavenly Father, that that which reason could not do, nor experience find out, thou hast done for us with infinite condescension, opening a way by which we should know that there is a God, and that his name is Love. Thou art the Father in heaven, and on earth, and in all the universe. Thou dost love those whom thou hast created, and all that thou art governing. Thy very severities are the strength by which thou dost divide between the good and the evil. The stripes and the punishments which thou dost inflict, are not sprung from hatred. Thou dost not love suffering. It is love that corrects. Like as a father pitieth his children, so thou dost pity us. Thou knowest our frame, that we are dust. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. We rejoice that punishment is not demoniac but divine, that thou art ruling everywhere with force where things need force, and with reason where things need reason, and with affection where things need affection and are susceptible of it. But everywhere, by force and by reason and by affection, thou art governing for infinite good; and thou rejoicest in it, and wilt rejoice to the very end. And we rejoice that we may come into sympathy with thee by becoming like unto thee. May we understand that we cannot know our God except as we are like him. Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God. May we have such purity in every faculty that we may be able to discern our Head—ours in infinite and glorified form—and rejoice in God, and be swallowed up in him.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant unto us, now, in thy presence, such gracious manifestations of thyself that we may not seem to ourselves strangers nor foreigners. May this be to us our Father's house. May this day be a day of blessing to us. Be thou here to administer thine own gifts. And grant that every one may feel that he is searched out and known. For thou dost know every one of us by name, and by occupation, and by place; and all our history. We rejoice, O Lord, that thou hast made this manifest.

And we pray that we may have, to-day, a sense of thy personal interest in each one of us. Bless those that need the consoling influences of thy Spirit. May the Comforter be their companion; and may the joy of thy salvation chase away their griefs; or may they be able to bear them.

We pray that thou wilt teach those that mourn how to mingle gladness with mourning. Teach those in trouble how out of trouble there may come the purifying flame as well as the smoke.

We pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt grant that those who are weak, and who are discouraged, and who are ready to perish, may straighten up, and feel that God is their strength—God in the heaven, and God on the earth—the God that watches the sparrow, and that counts the very hairs of their head. May they feel that they have a right to come to him in every time of trouble. May they gird up their loins, and cast away the cowardice of fear and despondency, and walk valiantly to the end of life—till thou shalt call them home.

Let any who are perplexed as to the way of duty find the light shining upon their path. May they see plainly the course which they ought to pursue. And help them by discipline to discern things right or wrong. Help them more and more perfectly to be able to interpret for themselves what is right and what is duty day by day.

Grant thou that all the memories of the past may be sanctified to every one. How many there are whose thoughts are withdrawn from the future, and borne back into the captivity of the past! How many there are who

* Immediately following the reception of members into the Church.

seem to themselves as though they had been carried away by the flood! How many there are whose hopes are dishevelled! How many there are who are without motive, and almost without a wish to live! How many there are who mourn in the secret places of the past! How many there are who see their hopes and expectations blighted! Look out upon them, O Lord, we beseech of thee, and rebuke them and bring them out of the wilderness of their own imagination. Make them feel that they are, in life, not to take care of themselves, and not to move round and round a centre of their own experience, as if the end of living was to please themselves. May they look forth as thou dost, and see the world that groans and travails in pain until now. How many there are that need instruction! How many that need comforting! How many little ones need rearing! How much there is to be done! and how hard it is to do it! And oh, that we might be filled with a better enterprise! Oh, that we might be borne away from our selfish longings and desires, and from mourning over unrealized hopes, into a more glorious sphere of activity.

And we pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt make us patient. If we are to be pillars in the house of our God, may we know how to bear burdens. If we are to be soldiers of our Master, may we know how to take hardness.

We pray that we may have all tenderness shown us in things pure and sacred, but that all tenderness may be taken away from us which leads to self-indulgence and to cowardice. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt help us more and more to preach Christ, not only with the lip, but with the eye, with the hand, with the things which we help others to do, and with the things which we do ourselves. May we be as lights to those that are around about us. May they look to us for gentleness and tenderness. And in practicing them toward those in our midst, may we enlarge our conception, and see that it is the pattern in small measure of that glorified whole which thou art in heaven, Lord Jesus, giving thyself as a perpetual offering, forever, living for others and finding therein thine own joy and satisfaction.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that thy servants who, this morning, have been joined to this household of faith, may not only be joined outwardly and historically to us, but may have a life in Christ, with the same hopes, and joys, and sorrows, and activities and sympathies which all his true disciples have.

We pray for any that have wandered into strange faiths. We beseech of thee that thou wilt restrain them and bring them back to the way of rectitude. And may those that have gone wrong, not be discouraged. Although they have stumbled, may they rise up and go forward again.

And wilt thou strengthen the weak knees and the feeble hands. May those who have not the power to sustain themselves, be sustained by thy strength. May none attempt to rely wholly upon their own might. May they take thee as their staff, and in the mountainous way may they lean upon thee; and in the dark valley may they still find strength and support in thee.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the young. The little children—will the Lord love them, and teach us to love them more and more. And in the various spheres of life in which they move, may we deal gently and tenderly with them. And may we sow in them the seeds of honor, and truth, and purity and duty.

Bless, O Lord, those who are going out of childhood, and are taking hold of the world with all its strange fascinations and delusions. We beseech of thee, grant that they may live for that which is true, and right and just among men; for that which is lovely; for that which is divine. And may they join to their thoughts, even thus early, a wide expanse of the future, that they may not seem to themselves simply creatures between the cradle

and the grave, but may think of immortality, even now, when they are beginning their life; and rejoice in their infinite, outstretched life.

And we pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt bless those on whom rest the burden and heat of the day. May they never be weary in well-doing. May they not be tempted to say, "I have done my part." May they not take their measure of what they are to do from the measure of what they have done. May they take their measure from their own strength and power, not thinking nor feeling that they have done enough, so long as there is more that they can accomplish.

And, O Lord, bless the aged who are among us. As they are prepared to lay aside the leaves of summer, and in autumn stand waiting for winter, may they glow with autumnal colors. May the glory of the Lord rest upon them. May their most joyful and serene and beautiful days be the days in which they are waiting for the coming of the Son of man.

We pray that thou wilt bless all wanderers from us—all that are upon the sea; all that are in distant lands; all that are far away separated from us by distance and occupation; and all that are still further separated by dissipations and vices and crimes. O Lord our God, remember the absent, and bless them.

And grant, we pray thee, that in our varied lives, all roads may lead to the heavenly gate, and that the households of the Church may be gathered as a great household of faith at last, where former things shall have past away, and where pain and crying shall be known no more forever.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

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